

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MA, US

SUBJECT: BRIEFING MATERIAL ON INDIAN OCEAN

REF: TANANARIVE 1704

1FOLLOWING IS UNCLASSIFIED BRIEFING MATERIAL REQUESTED
PARA 2 REFTEL WHICH WAS PREPARED BY DOD/ISA FOR SENATOR
BARTLETT:

"SOMALIA: UPDATE SINCE MAY 1976

"1. NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED AT THE BERBERA
MISSILE HANDLING AND STORAGE FACILITY. SOME ADDITIONAL
CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERWAY NEAR THE FACILITY, BUT IT HAS
NOT PROGRESSED SUFFICIENTLY FOR DETERMINATION OF ITS
PROBABLE USE OR FUNCTION. THE NUMBER OF STYX MISSILES
BELIEVED TO BE AT THIS FACILITY REMAINS AT ABOUT 30,
AND NO OTHER TYPES OF MISSILES HAVE BEEN REPORTED HERE
ALTHOUGH THIS FACILITY IS PROBABLY CAPABLE OF HANDLING
MORE MODERN SOVIET NAVAL MISSILES.

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"2. RECENT CONSTRUCTION AT THE NEW BERBERA AIRFIELD

INDICATES THAT ITS RUNWAY MAY EXCEED THE 14,000 FOOT LENGTH PREVIOUSLY ESTIMATED. IF CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES AT THE PRESENT RATE, IT COULD BE COMPLETED LATE THIS YEAR OR EARLY NEXT YEAR. CLEARLY SUCH A RUNWAY WILL BE LONG ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE ANY KNOWN AIRCRAFT IN THE SOVIET INVENTORY.

"3. THE SOVIET-BUILT FLOATING DRYDOCK WHICH WAS TOWED TO BERBERA IN DECEMBER 1975 WAS USED TO SERVICE THE SOVIET BARRACKS SHIP WHICH HAS BEEN AT BERBERA SINCE LATE 1972. THE BARRACKS SHIP WAS PLACED INSIDE THE FLOATING DRYDOCK IN APRIL, RECEIVED SOME TYPE OF MAINTENANCE, AND REMOVED A MONTH OR SO LATER. SIMILAR MAINTENANCE IS PROBABLY BEING PERFORMED ON OTHER SOVIET SHIPS AS THIS DRYDOCK CAN ACCOMMODATE SOVIET SHIPS UP TO AND INCLUDING THE KRESTA II CLASS GUIDED-MISSILE CRUISERS.

"4. IN ADDITION TO THE SA-2 (GUIDELINE) SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES ALREADY INSTALLED IN THE MOGADISCIO AREA, SA-2 EQUIPMENT HAS RECENTLY BEEN DEPLOYED TO NORTHERN SOMALIA. THE NEW EQUIPMENT APPEARS SUFFICIENT TO FORM FOUR ADDITIONAL FIRING BATTALIONS WHICH WOULD DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF SA-2 UNITS IN SOMALIA. THE INTENDED LOCATION OF THESE UNITS IS AS YET UNKNOWN.

"5. AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY IS BEING INSTALLED AT THE SECURED STORAGE FACILITIES AT DARAWEINA AND ISCIA BAIDOA. WHILE THE INTENDED USE OF THESE STORAGE FACILITIES (AND THE ONE NEAR MOGADISCIO) IS STILL UNKNOWN, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM INDICATES THEIR IMPORTANCE WITHIN A GENERAL SOMALI MILITARY CONTEXT. ONLY SOMALI AIRFIELDS AND SIMILAR SENSITIVE FACILITIES ARE PROTECTED BY AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS.

"6. TWO SOVIET ANTISUBMARINE WARFARE MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT RECENTLY DEPLOYED TO MOGADISCIO INTERNATIONAL AIRFIELD FOR THE FIRST TIME. THESE AIRCRAFT HAVE USED THE AIRFIELD AT HARGEISA SEVERAL TIMES SINCE LAST APRIL, AND HARGEISA WAS THE ONLY SOMALI AIRFIELD KNOWN TO HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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BEEN USED TO SUPPORT SOVIET MILITARY OPERATIONS UNTIL RECENTLY. SOVIET TRANSPORTS HAVE USED SEVERAL SOMALI AIRFIELDS, ESPECIALLY IN CONNECTION WITH DROUGHT RELIEF AND SUPPLY OPERATIONS LAST YEAR.

"7. SOVIET NAVAL UNITS, INCLUDING A GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYER AND SUPPORT SHIPS, CONTINUE TO USE THE BERBERA PORT." KISSINGER

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